

# Weekly Market Bulletin

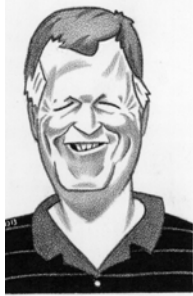
State of New Hampshire  
**John H. Lynch**  
*Governor*

Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food  
**Stephen H. Taylor**  
*Commissioner*

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## From Your Commissioner...

### Gas Prices Too High For Old-Time Pumps

As the price of gasoline rocketed above \$3.30 a gallon just after Labor Day NHDAMF's Bureau of Weights and Measures staffers took to the field looking for violations of state law relative to fuel price posting and calculation.

Over the course of five days some 235 gas stations were visited and 3,328 individual pump meters were checked, representing about 27 percent of all the meters in the state. The outcome: just 24 pumps were found to be in violation.

Virtually all of the non-conforming pumps were old-style analog units, where the product flows through a measuring chamber that is connected to a set of gears and shafts that mechanically roll up the numbers visible on the face of the pump.

The problem with these devices is not that they're inaccurate, but that they can't compute above \$3 per gallon. It's possible to install a modification kit that works up to \$4 a gallon, but then the meter can't compute below \$3. Most of these old-style meters are located at small gasoline retailers in the northern part of the state.

Owners of these problem pumps can cover over the price display and use the gallonage display and a calculator to figure the amount the customer must pay, or they can invest in new digital technology pumps. "Half pricing"—setting the pump to calculate at half the going price and then doubling the total at the cash register—is illegal.

Richard Cote, supervisor of the Bureau of Weight and Measures, says New Hampshire consumers can feel confident their fuel purchases are correct in terms of volume received.

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Bulletin reader Otis Dyer down in Rehoboth, MA, says coyotes are the cheapest and best deterrent to bothersome Canada geese. His farm was overrun with the birds until a decade ago when coyotes began showing up in his southeastern Massachusetts area.

"From what I saw, the coyotes did not go out of their way to stalk or hunt the geese, just their presence in the area was enough to make the geese uncomfortable and leave," he writes.

"Every spring one or two pair of geese will try to nest, but soon leave....sometimes if left alone nature balances things out."

Before the coyotes came on the scene Dyer had Canada geese so bold they'd go into his hen house and help themselves to the grain.

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While Canada geese are relative newcomers to the nuisance critter scene, USDA's Wildlife Services unit in New Hampshire has been busy with longstanding problem animals like bears.

Last year Wildlife Services responded to over 1,000 requests for assistance involving a variety of bear conflicts. A toll-free bear information and referral service line was established and efforts to reduce bear depredations to agricultural crops were stepped up.

All this hard work apparently is starting to pay off, as the total funds reimbursed to farmers for bear damage

declined by 30 percent in the last fiscal year. Electric fencing and harassment materials are the prime tools for managing bear issues relative to agriculture.

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Curt and Sharon Jacques, owners of West Lebanon Supply, a large feed store business, have spearheaded a special kind of Katrina relief effort. They challenged other Blue Seal feed dealers in the region to join in donating 100 tons of cat and dog food to feed rescued animals located in temporary shelters.

Corporate headquarters of Londonderry based Blue Seal Feeds is matching the donations made by its dealer network. The Jacqueses alone have raised over \$18,000.

**Steve Taylor, Commissioner**